Bisfi sub-division under Madhubani district in Bihar;

(b) whether there is any proposal for opening of new branch post offices at Chahunta in Bisfi sub-division, Ejra, Urihn in Benipatti sub-division and Gauri Meren in Rajnagar sub-division;

(c) the time by which the above demands are likely to materialise; and

(d) the new post offices proposed to be opened in Madhubani and Dharbhanga districts?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes Sir, there has been demand for upgradation of Post Offices at Bisfi, Barha and Simri. Their upgradation was examined but found not justified.

(b) There is no proposal for opening of Post Offices at Chahunta, Ejra, Urihn and Gauri Meran.

(c) As there is no proposal for opening post offices at these places no time frame has been laid for opening of these offices.

(d) During 1991-92 it is proposed to open 7 post offices each in Madhubani and Darbhanga Districts. The exact places are not yet decided.

[*English*]

Joint Commission of India and Saudi Arabia

546. SHRI E. AHAMED: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any Joint Commission of India and Saudi Arabia for mutual consultation on matters of common interest; and

(b) if so, when was the meeting of that Commission last held?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. There is a Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Co-operation.

(b) The last session was held in Riyadh from the 20th to the 22nd of April 1986.

Opening of New Post Offices

547. SHRI ANADI CHARAN DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new post offices proposed to be opened during 1991-92 in the country, State-wise;

(b) the norms fixed for opening of new post offices in sub-plan and non-sub-plan areas; and

(c) the norms for providing a 'runner' to a post office?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) 2000 new Extra Departmental Branch post offices and 200 departmental Sub Post Offices are proposed to be opened during 1991-92 in the country. A state-wise break-up showing the number of new ED Branch post offices and that of Departmental Sub-Post offices to be opened is indicated in Statement I and Statement I(A) respectively.

(b) The norms fixed for opening of branch post offices in rural areas are indicated statement II.

(c) A runner is given to a post office on the basis of workload which is calculated on the basis of time taken in transporting mails from point to point. A branch post office is normally provided with an extra departmental mail carrier either exclusively or in combination with other post such as extra departmental delivery agent/Extra Departmental Branch Postmaster, depending on the workload.